













we cannot help remarking in passing, how profitable the trade must have been up to four years ago, for after this loss, which averages over 1000 dollars per house, many of them are reported to be still possessed of considerable wealth. It goes to prove how large the profits must have been in previous years, and how much cheaper tea can be produced than is generally thought. To continue, however, the reported account of what took place at the meeting, the majority expressed their opinion that the trade was no longer worth following. The risk was too great, the demand had fallen off and prices had declined to an unprecedentedly low figure. What was more, they appeared to one of the speakers to be still on the decline, and it was apparent that there was no safe basis on which to base their operations. There was a general expression of want of confidence in the future of the trade, and in the end only 60 out of the 180 houses decided to continue to risk their capital in it.

We have no means of checking the accuracy of the report of the meeting, but we have sufficient confidence in the source whence it is derived to believe that it is substantially correct, and therefore we have no hesitation in publishing it for the information of our readers. It is no matter of surprise that such a meeting should have taken place. The continuous fall in prices this season, following a corresponding course of the market last season, was enough to create alarm in the hearts of the most phlegmatic of the tea men, and at last it seems to have aroused them to the necessity of taking combined action for the protection of their interests. According to the report of the meeting as it was, the tea men of the houses trading in this locality, Fook-oh, are retreating from the business altogether. The first effect of this will be reduced competition amongst the un-ventured buyers, and as there is no reason to suppose the yield will be less than last year, the buyers by combining will have it all their own way, and they will be able to buy cheaper than they have ever done before. The question then arises, how far foreign merchants will benefit by this? If patience is only exercised, of course they will reap the full advantage of it, and it is to be hoped, for the future well-doing of the port, that they will stand out, and not be tempted to pay higher prices than is absolutely necessary, even for fancy "chops." In this way the fortunes of the trade may yet change.—*Echo*

#### NOTES FROM NATIVE PAPERS.

During another examination of the alleged Koloa member Chai Chai-hui, the other day on account of his obtaining information from the prisoner was again tortured by being stretched on a bare pole. The strain was so great that Chai-fai-hui under the ordeal. He was restored to his senses by sprinklings of cold water, but he still made no incriminating statement. While he was being taken to prison, the court told him to write to his wife requesting her to come and take him home, who was captured and who has since remained with the prisoner.

About three years ago robbers entered a store in the village of Ying-tai-kang, near Woosung, and stole sundry, valued of cloth, dollars, silver, and clothing. The gang were captured at different times. After their trial and conviction the case was sent to the Board of Punishments for decision. A week ago the reply came to the Soochow authorities ordering five of the number to be decapitated, while the remaining three were to be exiled. The sentences were carried out, the five heads being taken for exposure to the place where the crime was committed.

Ping-an and Yu-lu report that the troops in the Chaoyang district have gained repeated victories over the insurgents and that the larger hands of the rebels are all but exterminated. The Fengtien troops dislodged the insurgents at Heliang-zu and Tzopokou, and Feng Shing-an gained repeated victories at Kaitaimiao and other places between the 9th and 22nd of December. At Hienkouze and Ershih-chiaze, other strongholds of the rebels, were taken one after the other, the rebels being in each instance defeated with great slaughter, their leaders being either slain or taken alive. All in all the Government troops may be said to have gained six distinct victories and they have so crushed the enemy that it will be impossible for him to reform into organized bands. When a junction has been effected with the Chihli troops on the east, it will be a very easy matter to dispose of the remnants of the rebel forces; and Ping-an and Yu-lu are hereby directed to impress on those concerned the necessity of bringing matters to a final conclusion with the least possible delay.

#### FOOCHOW NOTES.

It is rumoured in the city that the present Tartar General will be appointed Viceroy of this province. The natives predict forty days rain on the strength of the unusually thunderstorm we had last week. As there was another thunderstorm on the morning of the 18th, it is to be presumed that they will continue the rain for some time. It is said that there are in the city of Foochow some 100 mandarins of various ranks not holding office of any kind, and that there are amongst them a great many without any visible means of providing themselves with the necessities of life.

An old tree was struck by lightning at the North Gate of the City on the early morning of the 12th inst. Had this taken place a few hours later, the vendors of ground-nuts, sugar-cane and cakes, who every day set up their stalls under the tree, and whose produce have been killed. It was a lucky escape for them.

We hear of a sad occurrence on the night of the Feast of Lanterns. A man, a little way over the Bridge, was letting off fireworks, with a basket full of them by his side. A spark must have fallen into the basket, as, on his leaning down to select a fresh specimen of the pyrotechnical art, the whole of the contents of the basket exploded and burnt him so seriously that he died the next morning.

The late sudden changes in the weather have not been without their effect on the community. From a temperature of 67 deg. on the 13th, the day of our last weekly issue, there was a steady fall until the 17th inst., when the thermometer registered 48 deg. The following day it rose to 50 deg., and fell again to 53 deg. yesterday. To day it stands at 54 deg. To make it worse, there have been considerable falls of rain at intervals during the week, bringing about a disagreeable dampness and rawness in the air. No wonder so many colds and chills have been taken. Among the natives too there has been a great deal of sickness in consequence. On the nights of the 15th and 16th several beggars were found dead of cold and hunger.

A meeting was held last Tuesday at the Club, Mr. G. Simonsen in the chair, to discuss a proposition to form a Gun Club in this port. The proposition from the chair, and seconded by Mr. W. Graham "That a Gun Club be formed," was carried with acclamation, and the Fookoh Gun Club is now one of the institutions of the port and bids fair to be one of the most popular. The first meeting and the auspices of the Club was held last Thursday afternoon, when some excellent shooting was witnessed, the trap giving unqualified satisfaction, and, throwing its "blids" as it does with

great velocity, makes by no means an easy shot. We understand the Club meets for practice once a week and that a handicap match or sweepstake will shortly take place.

From a native who professes to be well informed on the subject, we learn that there are no fewer than 1800 opium dens in the province, and that the number of them is gradually but surely increasing. During the prosperous times, the sons of the well-to-do indulged in the vice, and now that they have houses of their own, one of the apartments is fitted up as an opium smoking room, and they invite their friends to come and smoke a pipe with them. In this way the habit has extended amongst this particular class. But the greatest increase, our informant states, is among the artisans and others in regular employment, who live on a minimum of food and spend what should provide them with a proper amount of nourishment at the opium dens. This is confirmed from other sources of information, with the addition that those who do not go from bad to worse are quite the exception. These men lose their situations, then sell everything they are possessed of, and finally steal to satisfy their craving for the pipe.—*Echo*

#### HANGCHOW.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

January 30th. This month has been remarkable on account of the bright, clear and dry weather, which has continued from the first day to the next to the last with hardly an exception. Indeed there is great need of a good rain or snow, and the people are specially anxious to have a fall of snow before spring, as winter snow is considered propitious and spring snow unpropitious. There has been a good deal of sickness in the form of influenza, colds, etc., and it is believed that a good snow would tend greatly to relieve us of these maladies.

The people here have been busily engaged for the past week with preparations for their new year's season. The first important event was the sending up of the kichin god to make his report to the Supreme Ruler concerning the events of the families over whose domestic affairs he has had an oversight. It is a custom with many to touch his lips with soft sugar in order that he may depart with a sweet taste in his mouth and make a favourable report.

The air has been resonant every night for a week with the noise of the crackers. Roman candles, set off with the general idea of driving off evil spirits that may be lurking around. But the chief feature of the new year's preparations is the collecting of debts. The pursuit of the creditor and the flight of the debtor is the order of the day—and the night. The chase comes so close and hot at the end of the year that all the gates of the city are left open during the whole of the last night. The propensity and success of the debtor in hiding and keeping himself concealed from creditors has given rise to the joke of calling him the Emperor, because he is not visible. With the first streaks of morning light, however, a halt is called and the chase must cease. The debtor may meet the dreaded creditor without the least fear. Nothing but pleasant words must be spoken on the happy new year and no unpleasant words can be made, at least until after the holiday season. It is a great mistake, however, to think that the debt is cancelled or that the account books may be burned. It is simply a truce between the contending parties for the holiday.

Today is New Year's Day and the Christians of the various denominations in the city met for a union service according to the custom for many years, and filled one of the largest houses of worship with about two hundred people. Among other things it was gratifying to learn that the present number of church-members in the city and the surrounding country, connected with the different missions, amounts to very nearly six hundred, of whom about one hundred were added during the last year.

As far as we can judge, the relations between the missionaries and Christians and the people are as cordial as ever and there are no indications of disturbance apparent. The soldiers are still kept on guard near the different mission premises and elsewhere. During the last weeks of autumn they put up houses for their barracks and they have been able to pass the winter in comfortable quarters.

The Chinese mails closed five days before the New Year's day and open on the fifth of the New Year, so we are cut off from communication with the outside world for about ten days. But to-day we have the rare opportunity of sending letters by a visitor who returns to his home in Shanghai.

#### CHUNGKING.

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.)

January 25th, 1892. Trade at this season of the year is, as usual, not very brisk, but there is still a fair amount of business being done on the whole. The revenue collected by the Customs for the half-year I should think would be considered very satisfactory, as it was only a few hundred taels short of one hundred thousand taels, and it will undoubtedly increase very materially, as there are still large quantities of goods leaving here, which pay *likin*, and which will eventually find their way through the Customs. The new Taotai took over the seals of office on the 14th and, according to custom, looked them up on the 18th to take a holiday for a month. Then we shall see what he will do about the transit pass business, which is at this time thoroughly demoralized.

In fact the transit pass system in this province is quite a dead letter, not because merchants do not wish to avail themselves of it, but simply because the *likin* barrier officials do not recognize any such arrangement.

The facts of the case are as follows. Three of the foreign firms here applied for transit passes for sundry lots of cotton yarn, which were duly issued to them and the goods were sent away; they passed the first barrier, which is near the city of Chungking and under the control of this Taotai. But when they arrived at Ho Chou, three days' journey from here, which is the next *likin* station, the goods were detained and the regular *likin* tax demanded. News was at once brought to Chungking and complaints made to the Consul and Commissioner of Customs, and through them to the Taotai. It may be well to state that the *likin* barrier at Ho Chou is not under the control of the Chungking Taotai, but is informed, immediately under the Viceroy. After the goods had been detained from ten days to half a month some of them paid the *likin* and others were allowed to go on to their destination; but an official belonging to the *likin* barrier was sent on board of the junk to go with the goods to their destination, and there collect the *likin*, which he did. The official in charge of the station declared to the merchant's representatives that he would not recognize the transit pass until ordered to do so by the Viceroy. The transit passes not being recognized were returned to the Customs, with a request that the half-duty paid on them should be returned. This the Commissioner declined to do, but requested the Taotai to recover the *likin* illegally collected on the goods. This, I believe, the Taotai undertook to do but without success, and finally he informed the Consul and Commissioner of Customs that the duty in charge of the *likin* barrier, Ho Chou simply ignored him in the matter entirely, and that he had no other alternative but to refer

the matter to the Viceroy. In the meantime the Consul have reported the matter to Peking. What action the Viceroy will take is not yet down, but from what he has already done that we know of, it is pretty certain that there need be no anxiety expected from him. The goods above mentioned were destined for Suoy Ling, Haic in the Prefecture of Tung Chuan, which lies to the north-east of Chienou, and is reached from Chungking by boat up the small river. There is not, nor never was, any *likin* collected there on goods that paid the *likin* tax en route and there are only two barriers between Chungking and that place, as above stated—one near Chungking and the other at Ho Chou. The amount collected was one thousand cash at the first, and the thousand six hundred at the second, the balance being somewhat in excess of the half-duty, so that it would be a little cheaper to use the transit pass, and also more convenient, as money would not have to be sent along with the goods to pay the *likin*. What has the Viceroy done in the matter? That is a question easily answered. He has taken prompt steps to prevent people from availing themselves of that regulation in future and has entirely done away with it, and allows no half-measures about it. He immediately dispatched an official to Suoy Ling and opened a new office for the sole purpose of collecting what they chose to term *Lote likin* on goods that arrived under transit pass, which had already paid a transit duty of two and a half per cent. The amount fixed by the Viceroy is three per cent. *Lote likin* is more than the total amount the goods would have to pay if they took out no transit pass. Now, if a merchant wants to use the transit pass it will cost him a little more than double what it would to pay the *likin*. From the foregoing it is clear enough that the Viceroy does not intend to allow the transit pass system to work in this province: it is well enough known to everyone, who has even the matter any consideration, that the transit half-duty was intended to cover all duties and taxes leviable on foreign imports, but the Ministers in the simplicity all-wed the Chinese officials to set up a claim to collect what they term *Lote likin*, and left it up to them to decide how much they chose to collect under that designation; as in this case the *Lote* is actually more than the total amount of *likin* collected on the goods if no pass were taken out, and that too in a place where there was no *likin* collected previously to the opening of Chungking. This is the way that China carries out her Treaties, which are in the eyes of the provincial authorities matters of form only, and do not satisfy the clamorous of the Foreign Ministers. Peking, but never seriously meant to be put into effect.—*Mercury*

#### THIS WILL SETTLE THE QUESTION.

"I don't believe there is a word of truth in it!" That is the certain foolish people talk when they hear of anything unusual, or outside the limits of their own observation of experience. They are of those who laughed at Stephenson when he introduced the railway, and at Morse when he said that we could communicate by means of electricity. Yet they don't laugh at those things now. They make use of them daily.

Some months ago the case of Mrs. Mary Cuddy was first published. The great public accepted the facts, as they had every reason to do. Others, a very few (professional men perhaps) pretended to doubt, and sent emissaries to inquire of the lady herself whether her allegations had not been added to, or altered, for the sake of popular effect.

Here is her answer! She repeats what she at first said, and puts a *quid pro quo* on all who called her words in question. It will be observed that her statement is as plain and solemn as language can make it.

[COPY.]

I, Mary Cuddy, of 24, Catherine Street, Richmond Road, Leeds, do solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:—

Ever since I was a girl I have suffered from illness. I always had a pain both before and after eating, and never seemed able to gain and keep my strength, and felt that something was pulling me down. I had a nasty queer feeling in my stomach. Sometimes food seemed to ease it, and at other times it made me feel worse, and often I went without food, for I was afraid to eat. Commonly when food was placed before me I could not touch it, and I often fainted at the very sight of it. After a while I began to lose weight, and scarcely dared to walk. I thought it was consumption coming on by degrees and I took all sorts of medicines to try and get relief, but it was of no use, and I got tired of taking physic, for I had lost all faith in it. My business was so urgent that I was compelled to be at work, otherwise I would have laid in bed, so weak had I become. With this weakness and loss of appetite there were other feelings and was, for a week I could scarcely stand or walk. 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